

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 /067 W
-----092086 030546Z /20

R 021801Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 988
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
MEMBASSY BONN 9282
AMEBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BE
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN GE
USINCEUR VAIHENGEN GE
CINCUSARERUR HEIDLBERG GE
SECDEF WASHDC
HQ TAC LANGLEY AFB VA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3955

PASS DOC/ISA FOR GENERAL BOWAN

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: OCON, MILI, NATO, AWACS, IT
SUBJ: AWACS BREIFING: ROME

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REF: STATE 046796

1. AWACS BRIEFING HELD TODAY (MARCH 2) AT MINISTRY
OF DEFENSE OF GROUP HEADED BY MINITER RUFFINI.
RUFFINI LED A REMARKABLE TURNOUT OF SENIOR ITALIAN
MILITARY: CHIEF OF ARMED FORCES STAFF CAVALERA, ARMY
CHIEF OF STAFF RAMBALDI, AIR FORCE CHIEF METTIMANO,

SECRETARY GENERAL MOIZO AND A VERTIBLE GALAXY OF FLAG RANK OFFICERS. NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF TORRISI WAS NOT PRESENT, BUT APPARENTLY ONLY BECAUSE HE WAS AWAY FROM ROME. UNDERSECRETARY OF DEFENSE PASTORINO ATTENDED, AS WELL AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFIARS.

2. GENERAL PIOTROWSKI GAVE EXTREAMLY LUCID AND EFFECTIVE BREIFING ONE OF THE BEST WE HAVE HEARD ON THE AWACS PROJECT TO AN ESSENTIALLY FRIENDLY BUT PARTLY SKEPTICAL AUDIENCE. MUCH OF THE SKEPTICISM THAT REMAINS IS IN THE ITALIAN AIR FORCE AND OF THE FOX-AND-GRAPES VARIETY. SOME MEMBERS (INCLUDING THE CHIEF OF STAFF) OF THE IAF REMAIN OPPOSED TO THE SYTEMS BECAUSE ANY ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION WOULD BE IN CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES LIKELY COME OUT OF THE SERVICE BUDGET, INCLUDING THE INCREMENT PROVIDED FOR IN THE PROMOTIONAL LAW, AT THE LIKELY COST OF REDUCING THE NUMBEROF MRCA'S PROGRAMMED FOR ACQUISITION. MINISTER RUFINNI EXPRESSEE HIGH INTEREST IN THE PRESENTATON, HOWEVER, AND ASKED FOR ADDITIONAL WRITTEN MATERIAL FOR STUDY. GENERAL PIOTROWSKI AGREED TO PROVIDE IT.

3. COMMENT: THE BRIEFING WAS GENRALLY WELL RECEIVED AS A TECHNICAL PRESENTATION. WE DOUBT THAT IT SUCCEEDED MUCH IN TURING THE ITALIANS AROUND IN THEIR ATTITUDE
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TOWARD PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM. THE IMPEDIMENT REMAINS CLEARLY AND PRIMARILY ECONOMIC. NONETHELESS IT WAS USEFUL IN KEEPING THE DIALOGUE OPEN HERE IN ROME AND RUFFINI'S INTEREST IS ENCOURAGING, SINCE THE ULTIMATE DECISION WILL BE MADE BY THE POLITICIANS, NOT THE MILITARY. IN BROADER TERMS THE PRESENCE OF THE TOP RANKS OF THE ITALIAN MILITARY SERVICES WAS IN ITELELF DEMONSTRATIVE OF RUFFINI'S PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE ITALIAN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. AND NATO. IT WAS CONFIRMATION, TOO, OF REPORTS WE HAVE HAD FROM SOURCES IN THE MOD THAT RUFFINI'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THAT RELATIONSHIP IS THAT IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF AMBIGUITY SURROUNDING THE CONTINUING POLITICAL CRISIS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE MOD SHOW IN EVERY VISIBLE WAY POSSIBLE ITS SOLIDARITY WITH THE U.S. AND THE ALLIANCE.HOLMES

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NNN

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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